

Docket No. 010077

Serial No. 09/775,894

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Before this response, claims 1-23 were pending in the application. In this response, applicant cancels claims 18-23 without prejudice and amends claims 1, 7, 9, 12 and 15. Applicant respectfully submits claims 1-17 for further examination, reconsideration, and allowance.

Allowable subject Matter – “Objected to” Claims

The Examiner indicated that claims 19, 21, and 23 would be allowable if rewritten to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations of its dependent claims 18 and 19, applicant has amended claim 7 to include the limitations of its dependent claims 20 and 21, and applicant has amended claim 15 to include the limitations of its dependent claims 22 and 23, thereby providing the same effect as rewriting the dependent claims to include the limitations of the base claims and intervening claims. All dependent claims depend directly or indirectly upon claims 1, 7, or 15, and therefore follow.

Minor clerical errors were corrected in claims 9 and 12, to add the word “and.”

Rejections Under §102(b) and 103

All claim rejections have been rendered moot by applicant's claim amendments to include the patentable subject matter indicated by the Examiner.

In the outstanding office action, claims 7, 8, 12 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook et al. (U.S. 6,005,884) in view of Mano et al. (U.S. 5,319,700). Claims 1, 3-6, 14, 15, 18, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook et al. in view of Mano and in view of Heiman et al. (U.S. 6,002,918). Claims 2 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook in view of Mano et al. or Cook et al. in view of Mano and in view of Heiman et al. as applied to claims 7 and 7 above, respectively, and further in view of Ames (Ames, U.S. Patent No. 5,233,626). Claims 9, 10, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook in view of Mano et al. as applied to claim 7 and 12 above, and further in view of Heiman et al. (Heiman, U.S. Patent No. 6,002,918). Claims 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook in view of Mano et al. (Cook, U.S. Patent No. 6,005,884) in view of Heiman et al. (Heiman, U.S. Patent No.

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6,002,918) as applied to claim 15 above, and further in view of Brozovich et al. (Brozovich, U.S. Patent No. 5,661,434).

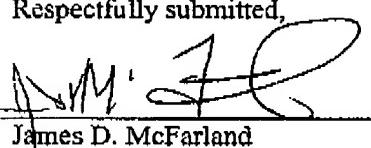
Applicant has amended each of the independent claims 1, 7, and 15 to include the limitations of claims that were indicated to include allowable subject matter. All remaining claims depend from these three independent claims, and therefore follow.

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections under §102(b) and §103.

Applicant therefore respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Please charge any necessary fees to Deposit Account No. 17-0026.

Respectfully submitted,

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